(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the response of the U.S. Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH) (a) and (b) The U.S. Department of Defence has notified the U.S. Congress of proposed sale of military equipment to Pakisan including eight P-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft, six PHALANX Close-In Weapon Systems and an ammunition complement of 2000 TOW-2A missiles and 14 TOW-2A Fly-to-Buy missiles. The U.S. Department of Defence has informed the Congess that the sales would contribue to the foreign policy and national security of the U.S. by helping to improve the security of a friendly country that has been and continues to be an important force for economic progress in South Asia and the global war on terrorism.

(c) to (e) India's strong concern in this regard has been conveyed at high levels to the US Government. The repercussions of such sales on the ongoing India-Pakisan dialogue, curently poised at a sensitive juncture, were brought out by us. Such transfers of arms to Pakistan at a time when Indo-U.S. relations saw significant transformation and when U.S. is perceived in India as strategic partner will impact on the positive sentiments and goodwill that have come to characterize Indo-U.S. relations.

(f) U.S. officials have stated that the United States values its relationship with India and have recalled President Bush's personal commitment to take it forward. As far as India-Pakistan relations were concerned, while the United States has an arms supply relationship with Pakistan, it was supportive of the India-Pakistan dialogue. It would also continue to take up concerns relating to cross-border terrorism.

Co-operation between India, Japan, Brazil and Germany for seat in Security Council

735. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what kind of co-operation between India, Japan, Brazil and Germany has to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council;

(b) whether it is a fact that the foreign Ministers of Japan, Brazil, Germany and India met recently;

(c) if so, the outcome of the meeting;

(d) whether it is also a fact that Pakistan is opposing India's claim for getting Security Council seat; and

(e) if so, what impact does this opposition have on India's chances of becoming a permanent member of the Security Council?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNALAFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) An agreement has been reached between what is now being termed as the 'Group of Four Aspirants'—Brazil, India, Germany and Japan—that these countries are legitimate candidates for permanent membership in an expanded Security Council and will support each other's candidature. They also agreed that Africa must also be represented in the permanent membership of Security Council. A summit of the leaders of these four countries was held on September 21, 2004 in New York which was attended by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, President of Brazil, Prime Minister of Japan and Deputy Chancellor of Germany. The summit was a significant statement of intent by these four countries to participate in the UN reform process on the basis of a mutual understanding to support each other. Subsequently, the Foreign Ministers of these four countries held a meeting in New York on 24 September, 2004 to plan the future work to realize the objective.

(d) Some countries, including Pakistan, are known to be opposing the expansion of the UN Security Council in the permanent category.

(e) Decisions on reforms are to be considered by the entire membership of the UN and accodingly views of any country have to be seen in this perspective. India believes that the reform and restructuring exercise is important and that by an objective criteria, India's case is credible and strong. There is growing momentum in support of India's candidature for permanent membership. However, in view of the diverse perceptions on the specifics of such reforms among member States, no time frame can be set for concrete progress.